

I was recently informed of Sinclair Broadcasting's decision to force their stations to air an anti-Kerry documentary days before the election. If that is correct, it is a clear example of the dangers of media consolidation.

Sinclair uses the public airwaves free of charge, and is obligated by law to serve the public interest. But when large companies control the airwaves, we get more of what's good for the bottom line and less of what we need for our democracy. Attempting to influence an election by requiring a one-sided smear of one candidate to be broadcast on by all their affiliates so close to the election is not a balanced use of the airwaves. Instead of something produced at "News Central" far away, it's more important that we see real people from our own communities and more substantive news about issues that matter.

Sinclair's actions show why we need to strengthen media ownership rules, not weaken them. They show why the license renewal process needs to involve more than a returned postcard. Thank you.